



Virginia Association for Pupil Transportation October 2002 NEWSLETTER

Editor: Bill Carr

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT,



Barbara Goodman

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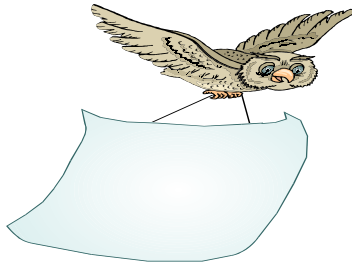
Transportation departments can do anything that is requested – they just can't do everything. Andy Forsythe, a consultant, used this phrase when referring to a transportation study just completed, and a superintendent saw the power in the statement and immediately put it into his presentations. Sometimes, we are our own worst enemy. The School Boards, policy makers, instructional specialists, school administrators, and our customers – the students and their parents, continue to make demands on the limited resources, and the transportation departments continue to deliver. Time and time again, transportation departments rise to the occasion.

Just as we have become accustomed to “flipping” the light switch in our homes and having immediate results, so is the expectation for transportation. A way is found to help instructional specialists implement a much-desired new program by establishing new special transportation routes, or runs are covered so a driver is available to make an unscheduled field trip. School administrators or teachers seldom know when drivers are out and runs are covered.

Customer satisfaction is the goal of transportation departments. However, with the economic bleakness that is looming in all school divisions, a smile from the school bus driver and an understanding, empathetic transportation director will not be enough when you have to tell students they have to walk farther to the bus stop, walk to school, find their own way to certain activities or programs, or ride in an older model, crowded school bus.

Many of the successful programs in our schools are dependent upon school bus transportation. Yes, some students will be able to drive or find a way, but others who are most at-risk, are the ones who are most dependent upon the school bus.

So, what will we choose? We can do anything - we just can't do everything.



POSTER CONTEST WINNERS

DIVISION:	<u>WINNER</u>	<u>SCHOOL DIVISION/SCHOOL</u>
	I	
	1 st Place Dequan Turner	Petersburg Walnut Hill Elementary
	2 nd Place Sophia Neuber	Clarke County Boyce Elementary
	3 rd Place Tanita Holmes	Isle of Wight County Hardy Elementary
DIVISION:	II	
	1 st Place Jessica Steeves	Norfolk Fairlawn Elementary
	2 nd Place Kristy Bergner	Clarke County Boyce Elementary
	3 rd Place Lacara Hawkes	Nottoway County Nottoway Intermediate
DIVISION:	III	
	1 st Place Michelle McKenzie	Waynesboro Kate Collins Middle
	2 nd Place Jennifer Anderson	Waynesboro Kate Collins Middle
	3 rd Place Anna Hammock	Waynesboro Kate Collins Middle
DIVISION:	IV	
	1 st Place Thomas Taylor	Petersburg Walnut Hill Elementary
	2 nd Place Darius Newell	Petersburg Walnut Hill Elementary
	3 rd Place Kevin Coleman	Petersburg Robert E. Lee

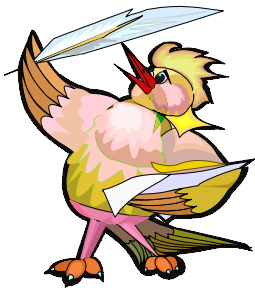
Please make the necessary changes to the following members email addresses listed below:

June Eanes
jeans@mail.vak12ed.edu

Becky Mummau
rmummau@mail.mcps.org

Frank Labrecque
Frank.labrecque@nn.k12.va.us

Gail Patterson
gpatters@hanover.k12.va.us



I'm Fine

I have arthritis in both my knees and when I talk I speak with a wheeze. My pulse is weak and my blood is thin, but I'm real well for the shape I'm in. I think my liver is out of whack and I have a terrible pain down in my back. My hearing is poor and my eyes are dim, most everything seems to

be out of trim. The way I stagger sure is a crime for I'm likely to fall at any time. But, all things considered, I'm feeling fine considering the shape I'm in. My complexion is bad, due to awfully dry skin, and my memory is failing and my head's in a spin. I'm practically living on aspirin these days, but I'm actually doing well for the shape I'm in. Now the moral is, as this tale unfolds, that for you and me, who are growing old, it's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin than to tell everyone of the shape we're in.

Author unknown



Region VII Shop Foremen Hold Meetings

In school year 2001-2002, Region VII Shop Foremen began something new. They met four times during the school year for in-service and workshops to share ideas and common problems. This process has begun again for the 2002-2003 school year. During these meetings, lots of information exchanges hands and allows shop foremen to establish good

working relationships with surrounding counties and creates a network that saves time and money when new problems arise that are sometimes difficult to solve. Shop foremen now realize that the answer could be only a phone call away.

During the meetings, which last from 10 am to 1 pm, the shop foremen go around the room and each person shares problems they had during the year and how they resolved them. Another part of the meeting includes scheduling factory representatives to attend and make presentations about the specific buses they sell and address any issues that are causing problems with their product. These presentations cover not only large issues, but also any issue no matter how small or insignificant it might be.

These meetings are supported and encouraged by the Region VII Transportation Directors. The meeting sites are alternated among the different localities with the idea of keeping the meeting as central as possible. These meetings have improved communication, created new friendships, and helped our shop foremen and mechanics to have a

better and more effective workplace.

Mike Puckett



NATIONAL NEWS

from the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services

Enhancing School Bus Safety and Pupil Transportation Safety

In late August, the State Directors Association released a statement, "Enhancing School Bus Safety and Pupil Transportation Safety," that set forth its views on the implications of two recent government reports.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) issued a report, "School Bus Safety: Crashworthiness Research," on the results of its research to develop the next generation of passenger crash protection in school buses. The report summarized the results of the agency's 3 ½ year research program. Another study, "The Relative Risks of School Travel: A National Perspective and Guidance

for Local Community Risk Assessment," was released by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Sciences in June 2002. That report provided statistical analyses of the relative safety of all modes of transportation used by children to get to and from school.

Because of the importance of these two reports, the State Directors Association felt it important to spend time analyzing the reports and carefully considering the potential implications of each report, both individually and in combination. For that reason, the association spent time talking to a wide variety of people, including people within the school bus transportation industry and people knowledgeable about the school bus transportation industry, motor vehicle safety, public expectations and reactions to safety matters.

The results of this effort provided the Board of Directors with sufficient information to formulate a thorough and insightful response to the two reports. The State Directors Association's statement has received wide distribution and can be read and downloaded from the association's

website
www.nasdpts.org

The State Directors Association believes the NHTSA and NRC reports have the potential to significantly impact both the school bus transportation industry and the pupil transportation industry. For that reason, the association believed it was important to issue a statement that would provide association members with information that can be used to discuss these reports with all interested parties, including parents, legislators, and the media.

THE NEW SCHOOL BUS-SPECIFIC CDL

In the July 31, 2002, edition of the Federal Register, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) published a Final Rule enacting a variety of revisions to the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Program. All of the areas of revision were mandated by the United States Congress when it passed the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999. The purpose of these revisions was to enhance the safety of commercial motor vehicle operations by ensuring that only knowledgeable, well-trained, safe drivers operate commercial motor vehicles.

One of the areas of revision to the federal CDL regulations created a new endorsement specific to school bus drivers. This "S" endorsement will be required of all new school bus drivers hired after September 30, 2002. In order to obtain an "S" endorsement, a candidate will have to satisfy the following three requirements:

1. Pass a knowledge and skills test for a passenger "P" endorsement under the CDL Program;
2. Pass a knowledge test covering at least:
 - a. Loading and unloading children at school bus stops;
 - b. Emergency exits and procedures ; and
 - c. State and Federal laws concerning safety at railroad grade crossing; and
3. Pass a driving skills test in a school bus of the same type the school bus applicant will drive.

The new CDL requirements allow a state to substitute previous experience in driving

school buses for the driving skills requirement. However, if a state chooses this option, the candidate for the "S" endorsement must certify, and the state must verify, that the applicant has met a series of requirements and has a good safe driving record. This option to substitute real-world school bus driving experience as a means of passing the driving skills test required for an "S" endorsement can only be used until September 30, 2005. At that time, all new and renewal school bus CDLs will be required to pass a driving skills test in a school bus in order to obtain an "S" endorsement.

When FMCSA issued the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that announced the agency's intention to create the new "S" endorsement, the State Directors Association and others commented that the "S" endorsement should be a stand-alone endorsement, rather than one that is based on obtaining a "P" endorsement first. The logic for this statement was based on the fact that many states use public funds to train candidates to become a school bus driver, but once they obtain the CDL with a "P" endorsement they often leave for a more lucrative job and never drive a school bus. This is a poor

use of public funds and takes limited funds away from school bus transportation operations.

The FMCSA believed this was primarily an economic issue and could be addressed through agreements between school bus driver candidates and the states. Further, it would not make sense for FMCSA to issue the requirements for an "S" endorsement, which are more strict than the requirements for a "P" endorsement, and then not allow the applicant to obtain the lesser endorsement at the same time as obtaining the stricter endorsement.

The State Directors Association believes the new CDL requirements have the potential for further improving the safety of school bus operations.



REGION I MEETING

The Area Region I Transportation Directors met on Tuesday, September 17, 2002, and was hosted by Hopewell City Public Schools. Don Unmussig and Brian Green were introduced as the newest staff of the

DOE Pupil Transportation Services.

We discussed:

- The budget crunch, both current and next fiscal year, and the impact to the operations.
- The staffing needs and training for drivers.
- The report on the VAPT/DOE Conference and discussed ideas, suggestions, and questions for the 2003 Conference to be held in Roanoke.
- Information for the NAPT one-day trade-show in Greensboro, NC on November 5.
- The proposed regulations for pupil transportation.

Our meeting schedule for the remainder of this school year is set:

October 15, 2002 at Hanover
November 19, 2002 at Petersburg
December 17, 2002 at Henrico
January 21, 2003 at Surry
February 18, 2003 at Chesterfield
March 18, 2003 at New Kent
April 15, 2003 at Richmond City
May 20, 2003 at Powhatan

Harold Grimes

Riddles



1. What is round at both ends and high in the middle?
2. A room full, a house full, but can't catch a spoonful?
3. What can go up the chimney down, but not down the chimney up?
4. When is a doctor most annoyed?
5. What do you put in a 10-pound barrel to make it weigh 5 pounds?
6. What goes up and down the stairs on its head?
7. Why does a fireman wear red suspenders?

School Bus



Rodeo WINNERS

First Place



Candy Murphy
Clarke County
Larry Hardesty, Director,
pictured with Candy

Second Place

Russell Altizer
Montgomery County

Third Place

Terry Spencer
Russell County

No matter what other nations may say about the United States, immigration is still the sincerest form of flattery.

Meet the Audit Committee Chairperson



Mitzi Cruise

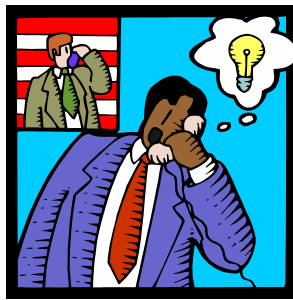
Working in the field of pupil transportation has been a part of her life since 1977. She started in Pulaski County as a special needs school bus driver and a social worker for the school division. She continued along this path for over 20 years, except she moved out of the social work field into pupil transportation only. She was a school bus driver trainer, a third-party tester through the DMV, dispatcher, secretary, field trip driver, and much more. As Mitzi continued to find out

more about management in the field of pupil transportation she knew that was the area of employment she wanted to pursue.

In 1998, she received her BS degree from Bluefield College and continued to work in Pulaski County. She became the Assistant Director of Transportation for Hanover County in October 2000 then in July 2002, became the Director of Transportation. She is still greatly enjoying her job and meeting the outstanding transportation leaders from all over the state. She finds her job to be an everyday learning experience.

Mitzi has been a Sunday School teacher, cheerleader coach, Girl Scout leader, PTA president and secretary, and vice president of the Junior Woman's Club and much more. She enjoys working for the public and feels right at home in her position as director.

She has a 21 year-old married daughter who resides in Pulaski County. Mitzi enjoys bike riding, hiking, reading, interior design, and crafts. She makes baskets, stained glass, paper mache', and needle crafts. At present she is taking a one-stroke painting class.



Sharing!

- The Virginia Beach School Division web site contains, "Frequently Asked Questions" about pupil transportation.

www.vbschools.com/busfaq.html

- Another school division requests your opinion on the following concern:

Do you require your school bus driver trainees to complete the driver physical process before allowing them to participate in BTW training that would take them off school grounds or private property and onto a street or highway.

Although we are not bound to the FMCSA standard, it sounds like they require a completed physical and driving permit before allowing driver trainees to even train on the road. I do not see where our state regulations address this specific question.

In trying to expedite our training process, we are faced with this new question and would appreciate your opinions.

Please email your opinions to the Editor, Bill Carr at bcarr@vbcps.k12.va.us to possibly be shared in a future edition of the VAPT Newsletter.



1977 Slate of Officers

President: Nathan H. Young, Henrico County

Secretary: Donald G. Travitz, Chesapeake

Treasurer: Roy E. Hopkins, Louisa County

The first annual VAPT conference was held on November 13-17, 1977 at the Holiday Inn-Airport in Sandston.

Alonzo Monday, Director of Special Services (DOE) spoke on funding for transportation, use of small vans, funding for special education, and increasing the

transportation reimbursement.

Buster Bynum, Supervisor of Transportation (DOE) spoke on issues pertaining to specifications, the implementation of the eight-light system, legislation concerning the use of stop arms on school buses, and self-canceling turn signals.

Gerald Campbell, Assistant Supervisor of Transportation (DOE) provided an update on the Driver Training Program recommended by that department.

Answers to the Riddles on page 6:

1. Ohio
2. Smoke
3. An umbrella
4. When he's out of patients
5. Holes
6. A nail in a shoe
7. To keep his pants up



REGION II MEETING

The first meeting of the school year was held on October 8th. This

meeting was held in Williamsburg/James City County and hosted by Randall Pingley.

As this was the first meeting held since the opening of schools, parts of the agenda were focused on the actual openings for the school divisions in this region. It was determined that, other than a few glitches, all the divisions enjoyed a basically smooth opening.

June Eanes and Vince Nevius also attended and shared pertinent VAPT information.

As always, the exchange of ideas and methods of addressing concerns in the region among the directors proved to be an invaluable tool.

The next meeting for Region II is scheduled to be held in Virginia Beach and hosted by David Pace.

Steve Washington

If you think you're too small to make a difference, you haven't been in bed with a mosquito.

DO YOU REMEMBER ?



How long has it been since you have seen a school bus number prefixed with No. as shown above ?



Remember the 1 red traffic warning light beside the driver's windshield and 1 red warning light on the rear of the school bus?